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SENATE

REPORT
99-517

PROVIDING FOR THE REAPPOINTMENT OF MURRAY GELL-MANN AS A CITIZEN REGENT OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

OCTOBER 2 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 24), 1986.—Ordered to be printed

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Mr. MATHIAS, from the Committee on Rules and Administration, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S.J. Res. 268]

The Committee on Rules and Administration, to which was referred the joint resolution (S.J. Res. 268) to provide for the reappointment of Murray Gell-Mann as a citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the joint resolution be agreed to.

Senate Joint Resolution 268 would provide that Murray Gell-Mann of the State of California be reappointed to the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution upon expiration of his current term on July 25, 1986, for the statutory term of six years beginning on July 26, 1986.

The Board of Regents is the governing body of the Smithsonian Institution and oversees a worldwide operation of scientific exploration, education, and display and preservation of irreplaceable artifacts and works of art. The Regents appoint the Chief Operating Officer of the Institution, the Secretary, and he or she serves at the pleasure of the Board. The Regents oversee a staff of over 4,000 people and an annual operating budget of over $300 million, over fifty percent of which comes from appropriated funds.

The Board is composed of seventeen members and consists of the Vice-President of the United States, the Chief Justice of the United States, three Members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, three Members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House, and nine other persons appointed by Joint Resolution of the Congress. Of the nine persons

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who are not Members of Congress, two must be inhabitants of the District of Columbia, and no two of the remaining seven may be inhabitants of the same State.

The statute establishing the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution does not provide for the submission of nominees by the President or any other body. The Smithsonian Board of Regents, however, customarily identifies candidates to fill vacancies on the Board and requests that the Regents who are Members of Congress introduce joint resolutions appointing such persons. S.J. Res. 268 was introduced by Senator Barry Goldwater for himself and Senators Jake Garn and Jim Sasser, the three Senate Members of the Board of Regents.

Service as a Regent is gratituous, except for necessary traveling and other expenses in attending meetings of the Board.

HEARING

A hearing was held by the Rules Committee on September 23, 1986. Dr. Robert McCormick Adams, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, testified in support of Dr. Gell-Mann's appointment. No testimony or statements in opposition to the appointment were received. Excerpts from the hearing follow:

Senator FORD. "Secretary Adams, if you have any remarks that you would like to make, I'd be more than pleased to hear them."

Secretary ADAMS. "Thank you, Senator Ford. I guess I would say that we are particularly delighted to have had the attention and the services of Dr. Gell-Mann for this period of time. He's the Robert A. Millikan Professor of Theoretical Physics at Cal Tech, a major scientific institution, of course. And Dr. Gell-Mann is in fact the only practicing scientist on the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian. And given the emphasis in our charter on the advance as well as the diffusion of knowledge, I think it's really quite important to have people with his background—certainly to have him. His interests have been directed in particular, in recent years, towards problems of not merely national but international resources and environmental problems. And those are problems that are of great concern to the Smithsonian.

"So he's been a very important and useful Regent in terms of the convergence of his interests and those of the Institution."

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Senator FORD. "Doctor, I have a couple of questions that I'll ask you. As you know, under Senator Mathias and myself we agreed to have the Regents to be appointed to the Smithsonian come before the Committee. Prior to Senator Mathias, that had not occurred, and we've found that it has been good for both of us.

"So I'm very pleased to help with this procedure.

"Doctor, during your twelve years of service on the Smithsonian Board, what have been your principal areas of interest and activity?"

Dr. GELL-MANN. "Well, as to activity, besides attending the Regents' meetings and being consulted from time to time by telephone by the executive committee and the officers of the Smithsonian about various issues that have come up, I've also served on the Audit and Review Committee when it was first set up under

Senator Jackson, and I was on the selection committee that selected a candidate for Secretary, who was then approved, and who is proving to be a splendid Secretary of the Smithsonian.

"I've also participated in a number of ad hoc activities—for example, going to Florida to discuss problems of Mr. Seward Johnson's Harbor Branch Foundation with which the Smithsonian had some connection for awhile; going with some Smithsonian officials to visit a collector in California who had some Chinese art that he was thinking of donating to the Smithsonian—many other things of that kind.

"It's been a glorious adventure so far.

Senator FORD. "Doctor, from your experience and observation, what are the principal problems associated with the Smithsonian?"

Dr. GELL-MANN. "Well, there are many, because the Smithsonian is now a very large and very important organization, and in a time of fiscal stringency it has to be very clever in maintaining and improving standards of quality and service. It's a real challenge in these times.

"I am confident that the present Smithsonian administration will be able to do that, but it will be very difficult."

Senator FORD. "As far as you are personally concerned, what would you like to see the Smithsonian have accomplished six years from now?"

Dr. GELL-MANN. "Well, I can tell you about that, and also continue the answer about my principal areas of interest. I think that the Smithsonian will continue to grow in the next few years, but that growth will necessarily be very small compared to what has happened in the last 20 years—it has expanded enormously.

"I think that the Smithsonian faces now the challenge of great steps forward in the quality and pace of research and scholarship.

"The Smithsonian also, I think, has a very important role to play in advice and discussion—advice on and discussion of the problems of managing our plant. You may have read in the newspaper in the last day or two about the plans of the principal academies of science of the world to study the global problems. And the Smithsonian I think has a very important role to play in that as well. Problems of atmosphere, in voluntary climate modification, biological diversity, agriculture and food production across the world, and so forth and so on—all related issues and many related to the various missions of the Smithsonian.

"I think the Smithsonian—and here I touch on one of my principal personal interest—I think the Smithsonian has great opportunity to play a very significant role in education. I know that when I was a child, before I was connected with great institutions of learning, where I could find out the latest things about science, the humanities, the social sciences, that museums were the best place to get up-to-date information about what was going on in the world of science and scholarship.

"And I think it's very important that museums, and particularly the Smithsonian, present not only little bits of disconnected fact and disconnected bits of culture, but try to organize those into syntheses, to present the great synthetic ideas of science, to present the great synthetic ideas of social science and of the humanities to

the public. Organizing exhibits and organizing the structure of museums so as to do that is a very great challenge.

"I think also that the Smithsonian has a very important role to play in unifying the various aspects of human culture, which are so often presented separately in our schools, in our professional societies, in our granting agencies, peer review groups, all sorts of other aspects of our society as it relates to culture, to science, to scholarship, the humanities, and the fine arts.

"The various subjects are presented as if they had almost nothing to do with one another. That's not really the case at all. All these various disciplines represent different ways of apprehending the same world, and the emphasis on that unity of human culture is rare.

"The Smithsonian is a wonderful place for that unity to be exhibited; it is an institution that ranges over the whole gamut of science, scholarship, fine arts—the whole of our culture really, the whole of human culture. And it is a very suitable place for the unity of that culture to be exhibited.

"One example, small example, of that in which I have been especially interested is the bringing together of the natural sciences with archeology, the history of art, and so on, in the scientific study of works of art and artefacts, which some people, for example, at Oxford University, call archeometry. And that activity is best carried on at a museum in connection with, but not subordinate to, conservation activities, because objects are very easily studied when they are subject to conservation treatment.

"And I may have played a small role in the building up in the conservation laboratory of work in archeometry."

Senator FORD. "While you've served on the Board of Regents, you've also been a member of the board of directors of the MacArthur Foundation. Have you perceived any conflict of interest?"

Dr. GELL-MANN. "I can't think of any at all. The MacArthur Foundation has engaged in programs of support for research relevant to—in research in subjects relevant to mental health, research on tropical diseases, studies of international security affairs, work on world environment and resources, in which I have been especially involved, the famous MacArthur fellowships and so forth. And I don't know of any conflicts. Many of the objectives are in line with the objectives of the Smithsonian."

Senator FORD. "Do you support the closed-meeting policy of the Board of Regents?"

Dr. GELL-MANN. "I can see many arguments in favor of it. Closed meetings are useful for discussing things like allocation of resources within the museum so that one is not embarrassed by the presence of the people carrying out the programs that are being discussed. Many other similar arguments can be presented which are rather strong.

"On the other side, there is the point that the majority of the funds involved are public, and one can argue that the public has the right to know what's going on in the meetings.

"I don't have any very strong feelings on one side or the other of the issue. I think on balance perhaps I support the closed-meeting policy—but I don't feel strongly about it."

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Senator FORD. "I thank both of you. Doctor, I look forward to your expedited approval. And we thank you for your contribution not only to the Smithsonian but to all of us, and we appreciate you, Mr. Secretary, being here to support his nomination, * * *"

COMMITTEE FINDINGS

The committee considers Murray Gell-Mann to be well qualified to serve as a Regent of the Smithsonian Institute.

COST ESTIMATE

In accordance with paragraph 11(a) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the committee does not consider that enactment of Senate Joint Resolution 268 would entail any cost to the Government.

REGULATORY IMPACT

In accordance with paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the committee does not consider that enactment of Senate Joint Resolution 268 would have any regulatory impact.

COMMUNICATIONS

A letter in support of Senate Joint Resolution 268, addressed to Senator Charles McC. Mathias, Jr., Chairman, of the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, from Robert McCormick Adams, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, enclosing a biography of Murray Gell-Mann, follows:

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION,
Washington, DC, July 22, 1986.

Hon. CHARLES MCC. MATHIAS,
Chairman, Committee on Rules and Administration,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I would like to take this opportunity to comment on S.J. Res. 268 providing for the reappointment of Dr. Murray Gell-Mann as citizen regent of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution.

Regents and the manner of appointment and terms of office of those other than Members of Congress are set forth in 20 U.S.C. 42 and 43. At its meeting on January 27th the Board of Regents voted to renominate Dr. Gell-Mann and asked its congressional members to introduce and support legislation to provide for his reappointment to a statutory term of six years when his current term expires on July 25, 1986.

Dr. Gell-Mann is a resident of California and was initially appointed to the Board of Regents on August 30, 1974. His particular interests are in the scientific activities of the Institution. A biography of Dr. Gell-Mann is enclosed.

Enactment of S.J. Res. 268 would have no regulatory impact and would entail no cost to the Government. I shall, of course, be happy to furnish any additional information you may require.

Sincerely,

ROBERT MCC. ADAMS, *Secretary.*

Enclosure.

BIOGRAPHY OF DR. MURRAY GELL-MANN

Dr. Murray Gell-Mann, theoretical physicist; b. N.Y.C., Sept. 15, 1929; s. Arthur and Pauline (Reichstein) Gell-M.; B.S., Yale, 1948; Ph.D., Mass. Inst. Tech., 1951, m. J. Margaret Dow, Apr. 19, 1955; children—Elizabeth, Nicholas. Mem. Inst. for Advanced Study, 1951; instr. U. Chgo., 1952–53, asst. prof., 1953–54, asso. prof., 1954, research dispersion relations, developed strangeness theory; asso. prof. Calif. Inst. Tech., Pasadena, 1955–56, prof., 1956—, now R.A. Millikan prof. physics. Mem. Pres.'s Sci. Adv. Com., 1969–72. Regent Smithsonian Instn., 1974—. NSF post doctoral fellow, vis. prof. Coll. de France and U. Paris, 1959–60. Recipient Dannie Heineman prize Am. Phys. Soc., 1959; E.O. Lawrence Meml. award AEC, 1966; Franklin medal, 1967; Carty medal Nat. Acad. Scis., 1968; Research Corp. award 1969; Nobel prize in physics, 1969. Fellow Am. Phys. Soc., mem. Nat. Acad. Scis., Am. Acad. Arts and Scis. (chmn. Western Center). Club: Cosmos. Author: (with Y. Ne'eman) Eightfold Way. Research theory of weak interactions, developed eightfold way theory and Quark scheme. Home: 1024 Armada Dr. Pasadena CA 91103.

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